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**ARMY CONTROL
IN MIDDLE EAST**

BY

COLONEL YUSUF YUKSEL KOKEN
Turkish Armed Forces

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The Gulf Crisis and War of 1990-91 showed us, once again, the importance of the need to have stability and security in the Middle East. Stability and security in the region can be achieved by eliminating the proliferation of mass-destruction weapons, preventing countries from exceeding the level of their legitimate security needs, and gaining an offensive capability. Also, we must guard against new hostile groupings that may threaten other countries.

This can best be done by achieving and implementing a comprehensive arms control and disarmament agreement or a series of agreements. But, the efforts on arms control and disarmament alone is not enough. In order to be successful, the Middle East needs a lasting peace, which can be achieved only by solving major political problems. However, in this paper, the unique one, the Arab-Israeli conflict has been taken as a major starting point in solving regional problems and enhancing the probability of achieving comprehensive arms control and disarmament agreements.

This paper will address the complete complex problem of arms control by examining political, economic, social and environmental aspects that can influence positively the arms control and disarmament process.

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ARMS CONTROL IN MIDDLE EAST

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

Colonel Yusuf Yuksel Koken
Turkish Armed Forces

Lieutenant Colonel William T. Johnsen
Project Adviser

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U.S. Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013

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ARMS CONTROL IN MIDDLE EAST

INTRODUCTION

When analyzing the issue of arms control in the Middle East, several important points that cannot be isolated from each other must be taken into account. First, I believe that arms control efforts, alone, cannot be the main objective in the Middle East. Instead, the main objective should be the creation of lasting peace in the region, which can be best accomplished through peace talks that resolve major regional political and security problems such as the problems of: the Palestinians, occupied Arab territories, and Israeli security needs.

Also, I believe that a significant arms control agreement cannot be achieved without solving these major Middle East problems. Arms control efforts and peace talks in the Middle East, as in other regions, significantly influence each other. So, arms control issues cannot be isolated from political developments. In other words, progress on the political field leads to progress on arms control issues. At the same time, any progress on arms control issues helps to lessen tension and mistrust between Arabs and Israelis and creates an appropriate atmosphere for progress in the peace talks. For instance, little or no progress was made in the Vienna Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction (MBFR) negotiations between NATO and Warsaw Pact (WP) countries in over 15 years because there were no major political changes and progress between the parties in this Cold

War period. But after 1987, Gorbachev's significant political changes made it possible to make great progress on arms control and disarmament in Europe in a relatively short time.

Second, the arms control process in the Middle East cannot be isolated from other arms control efforts in the world. The Strategic Arms Reduction Talks (START), the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), the Conventional Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty and the Open Skies process have fed off each other and contributed to the recent dramatic political changes in Europe by creating mutual understanding and trust among the countries of Europe. I believe that now is the time to widen these efforts and encourage the regional countries to make similar efforts in the Middle East to end old hostilities. Additionally, it is obvious that any progress on arms control issues, such as the agreement on chemical weapons or the United Nations arms transfer reporting system, will influence the Middle East arms control process positively. So, all arms control efforts in other parts of the world will continue to be a positive influence on the Middle East arms control efforts.

Third, arms control efforts cannot be isolated from the national and economic interests of arms exporter and importer countries. In other words, economic factors sometimes play a larger role in arms control efforts than many realize. Thus, concurrent efforts may have to be made to restrain the international arms trade.

Fourth, negotiations can succeed only if all nations accept the results. Therefore, considerable time may be needed to accommodate different points of view and opposing interests of the many countries involved.

Because of these trends, this study, will address the political, economic and historical developments in the region, the regional arms race, effects of the Gulf War and arms control in the Middle East. The essay closes with brief conclusions that may be drawn.

GENERAL THOUGHTS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

History of Major Middle Eastern Problems

Historically, the Middle East has been of great strategic importance as a land, sea and air connection between continents. The area is also the single greatest repository of oil in the world, possessing 70 per cent of proven world reserves and yielding 34 per cent of world production.¹ At the same time, this unique region has long suffered from serious and complex problems. Without solving these major Middle East problems, it will be difficult to achieve a comprehensive arms control agreement. Therefore, before analyzing the arms control proposals, a brief review of the history of major problems of the region is appropriate.

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire at the end of World War I created a power vacuum in the Middle East. In establishing the

new order in the region, the victorious European powers did not take into account the geographical, political, economic and sociological realities of the region. Instead, they created artificial states with artificial boundaries. For instance, some countries were too small to defend themselves. Some have considerable natural resources. Others are large enough to defend themselves, but possess limited natural resources. Further, the creation and expansion of Israel after 1948 failed to take into account the displaced Palestinians. This resulted in deep divisions and hostilities between the Arabs and Israelis. The most important problems today in the region originated from these divisions and hostilities.

The major Arab objective has been to unite against Israel, terminate the existence of Israel, and establish a Palestinian state. Later, they came to understand that the new realities in the region had to be taken into account and they began to change their policies. The original group of Arab states bent upon the destruction of Israel in 1948 has virtually disappeared. Now, surrounding Arab states seem ready to accept the existence of Israel in the region and to search for a way to live together in peace³. At the same time, they expect Israel to be more flexible in the search for fair solutions to the major problems such as the occupied Arab territories, and the Palestinian problem.

In the case of Israel, the major objective was to extend its borders to meet its vital security needs. But, recently, Israel

seems to have achieved some of her security needs and may be more flexible about major regional problems. For example, in 1977 Israel signed the Camp David accords with Egypt which included a form of arms control governing the demilitarization of the Sinai peninsula within the context of a general military accord.⁴ This solved a part of the occupied Arab territories problem, made Israel's southern boundary more secure, and ended the deep hostilities between these two countries.

Israel has recently given positive signals to solve some other major regional problems, such as the occupied Syrian territories. Prime Minister Rabin has expressed willingness to return land in the Golan Heights to Syria. So far, he has offered the Palestinians only the possibility of exercising administrative autonomy under Israeli rule for a "probation" period. If this probation proved successful, Israel might agree to end the occupation of some Palestinian territory.⁵ While there is no cause for tremendous optimism, one must remember that no country wishes to reveal its fall-back position before the end-game comes in a negotiation. So, there is also no need to be overly pessimistic.

Briefly, it appears that both sides wish to solve their problems and live together in the region in peace. One of the remaining obstacles to taking major steps quickly is the residual lack of mutual trust. Arms control efforts can help minimize this mistrust and create an appropriate atmosphere for progress.

Of course, the problems that have threatened the security of the region are not limited to the problems between the Arabs and Israelis. Many other issues: inter-Arab and inter-Islamic disputes (originating mainly from different religious sects), unequal distribution of the wealth of natural resources, competition for leadership in the region among the regional powers, etc., also complicate matters. For instance, Iraq-Iran, Iraq-Kuwait, Iraq-Saudi Arabia, and Iran-Saudi Arabia are some of the disputes that threaten the stability in the region. At a lower level of aggregation, almost everyone in the region perceives a threat of some sort from his neighbors. But, the Arab-Israeli dispute is the most prominent.⁶ Only solving the Arab-Israeli disputes can help solve other problems in the region and lead to a comprehensive regional arms control agreement.

The Arms Race In The Region

Instability and deep hostilities, arising from the issues described above, have led the regional countries into a massive arms race that has created a dangerous situation in the Middle East. Most importantly, the nature or size of the nuclear capabilities in the region are unknown, but could be significant. Israel is widely believed to have some 200-300 nuclear weapons.⁷ Additionally, the Peoples' Mujahedin claims that Iran signed an agreement with Kazakhstan and paid for nuclear warheads (which Iran may fit to Chinese-made Silkworm missiles), but that delivery has not yet taken place.⁸ The arrest of seven people

and seizure of radioactive materials in Germany that had been smuggled in from Eastern Europe in October 1992 has also heightened fears that the collapse of Communism could lead to a dangerous black market in nuclear weapons and the materials to build them.¹ Moreover, the Chinese government is building a nuclear research reactor in Iran that could be a part of an Iranian secret weapons program.² Even if all the information cannot be verified, Israeli, American and some European experts believe that Iran is heading for nuclear armament.³ Finally, the fact that Iran, with the assistance of North Korea and China, has been developing medium-range missiles makes nuclear proliferation even more disturbing.

Second, the conventional arms race in the region appears to be growing worse. The Chinese have continued arms sales in the Middle East and have become known in the region as a source of missiles when others would not provide them.⁴ The disintegration of the Soviet Union may also fuel arms sales in the Middle East. Russia and other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) have more armaments than they need⁵ and, concomitantly, have an urgent need for hard currency for their economies. In some cases, this has forced them to sell armaments abroad.⁶ For instance, despite Washington's strong opposition, Moscow has confirmed that \$375 million of arms sales in the region will go ahead.

Iran is trying to become the regional power in response to Iraq's weakness. This is seen as a move to control the entrance

to the Gulf, the conduit for more than half the Western world's oil imports.¹⁵ The arrival in the Persian Gulf of the first of three Iranian submarines, purchased from Russia, could pose serious problems for western naval ships now patrolling there.¹⁶ The West's Arab allies must pursue ways to counter the Iranian threat, including the purchase of costly anti-submarine warfare equipment never needed before.

As a means of supporting its allies in the Middle East, from 1988 through 1991, the United States accounted for half of all arms sales to the region: \$36.5 billion out of a total of \$73 billion. Those sales accounted for three-fourths of the value of all weapons the United States sold to the Third World in that period.¹⁷ In September 1991, the White House announced that Israel would be given \$650 million in Apache and Black Hawk helicopters, as well as Harpoon missiles, and that \$200 million in sophisticated U.S. munitions would be stored in Israel for possible use in an emergency by either U.S. or Israeli forces.¹⁸ One informed source indicates that the United States has contributed roughly half of a \$45 billion flow of arms into the Middle East since the Gulf War. These sales include 72 F-15E jet fighters (capable of flying more than 3,000 nautical miles, easily putting them within striking distance of Israel, Egypt and Turkey) to Saudi Arabia.¹⁹ This is a sharp contrast to the days immediately after the Gulf War when the U.S. announced a go-slow approach to Middle East weapons sales.²⁰

The Effect of Gulf Crisis and War

The experience of the Gulf Crisis and War of 1990-91 prompted the United States to pursue a resolution to the Arab-Israeli conflict with new vigor. As a quid pro quo for Arab support against Iraq, Washington was bound to address the Palestinian problem once the war was over. The cooperation between Arab and Western countries against Iraq's invasion in Gulf War created new hope and opportunities to solve the major problems in the region. Now, Arab expectations have to be taken into account, otherwise it may not be possible to convince Arab countries (except Iraq) to support U.S. participation and pursuit of its interests in the region. Also, it might not be possible to keep radical organizations, such as Hamas, from gaining power and creating new conflicts and instabilities in the region. If such a situation evolved it would be hard to achieve significant results on arms control issues in the region.

Furthermore, given the end of the Cold War and demise of the Soviet Union, Washington faces no superpower competition in the Middle East. In other words, the United States has more power and ability to influence the parties. At the same time, the United States, without jeopardizing commitments to Israeli security needs, has more responsibility to treat the parties more fairly, rather than supporting only one side as largely occurred during the Cold War.

To take advantage of the new situation, the United States initiated the regional peace process, which began October 1991 in

Madrid that started direct bilateral Arab-Israeli talks.²² To succeed, these talks need to be strengthened by creating mutual trust and understanding. At the same time, arms proliferation in the region had to be under control so that no country could cause another Gulf crisis or war.

ARMS CONTROL EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

The First Efforts

The Turkish Contribution

Turkey, having experience with the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) process, has wanted to share this experience with other countries of the region. To this end Turkey proposed the establishment of a series of Confidence and Security Building Measures (CSBMs) at the 17th Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Islamic Countries in Amman (1988).²³ These CSBMs would apply to the members of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) and covered the entire Middle East, except Israel. Because of the principles and contents of the proposal, it can be considered as a first attempt to establish serious and comprehensive arms control measures in the Middle East.

The proposal contains a confirmation of basic principles (such as those contained in CSCE Helsinki Final Act²⁴ and Concluding Document of the Vienna CSCE Follow-Up Meeting²⁵), politico-military CSBMs that can be applied in the first, second and third stages of progress; militarily significant CSBMs that

can be applied in the long term; cooperation on economics, science, technology, and protection of environment; and cooperation on humanitarian, educational and cultural issues. The proposal gives priority to basic principles and economic cooperation rather than strict arms control measures because many believe that creating common economic interests among these countries will breed more stability and lead to cooperation in other areas.²⁶

The Turkish "Peace Pipeline Project", a water pipeline which will benefit the countries of the region (Syria, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirate, and Oman, and can also include Israel when the political environment becomes appropriate), is an example of an initiative that has an economic dimension that supports Turkish arms control efforts in the OIC.²⁷ The water for the project will be obtained from the Seyhan and Ceyhan rivers in Turkey and transported by two large pipelines capable of carrying 6 million cubic meters of water per day. Pre-feasibility studies indicate that despite the huge investment involved, this project is technically and economically feasible. Having deep political implications, this project would contribute significantly to stability in the region through the economic benefits it would provide, as well as serving the common interests of all in a manner that would promote mutual trust.²⁸

Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, the Turkish proposals in the OIC have not yielded significant results.

First, the Islamic countries are located in different parts of the world and they all have different security needs. Second, the Turkish proposal does not address directly all of the Middle East because it omits Israel. Third, the major political problems, especially in the Middle East, remain unresolved. Fourth, a long time will be required for OIC members to understand and to be familiar with potential joint benefits of the initiatives described. But these efforts can be a foundation or a significant contributing factor for new arms control efforts in the Middle East.

Efforts of Other Regional Countries

In March 1991, after the Gulf War, the six states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and Oman), as well as Egypt and Syria held a meeting in Damascus. In the Damascus Declaration, their representatives publicly declared their joint commitment to guarantee the future security of the Gulf. They intended for the declaration to establish a new framework for Gulf security and seemed to suggest that Egypt and Syria would provide the military manpower which would act as an effective Arab deterrent force against future aggression in the region.²³ In reality, differences quickly emerged at the head-of-state level which effectively prevented any further progress in this direction.

Shortly thereafter (21 June 1991), Egypt sent a letter to the U.N. Security Council concerning new initiatives for arms

limitation and disarmament in the Middle East.³⁰ The letter stated that Egypt regarded positively all disarmament proposals which would ensure a qualitative and quantitative balance between the military capabilities of all states in the region. The letter also indicated that Egypt favored the conclusion of agreements on arms reduction and disarmament that would apply to all states of the region and would be complemented by effective monitoring measures. Moreover, priority would be assigned to ridding the region of weapons of mass destruction -- particularly nuclear, chemical and biological weapons -- together with consideration of measures for conventional arms reduction when political circumstances permit.

To date, little has come of the Egyptian initiative which shows that it is not enough to send a letter to the U.N. Security Council to be successful on an arms control issue. Much more diplomatic efforts, including additional initiatives in other fields, such as regional economic and cultural developments, will be required.

Bush's Initiative, 29 May 1991

On 29 May 1991 President Bush announced a series of proposals intended to curb the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons in the "entire Middle East from the Maghreb east to include Iran," as well as the missiles that can deliver them.³¹

One of the main objectives of this Middle East arms control process is to contribute positively to the Middle East talks between Israel and the Arab countries by creating mutual trust and understanding. At the same time, it is intended to bring arms proliferation in the region under control so that no country could cause another crisis or war and no nation fears for its security in the Middle East.³²

While the initiative stressed the global dangers of proliferation, it also highlighted the need to address the issues in a step-by-step fashion and to begin with the Middle East. The step-by-step approach requires a continuous effort which increases the probability of success of the process.³³

At the beginning, it seems improbable that all countries will discuss arms control issues in a positive manner. Therefore, the best approach may be initially not to invite those countries whose participation could create more problems than their absence: Iraq, Iran and Libya. At the same time, we have to be ready to include these countries in the Middle East arms control process at the appropriate time because without participation of all countries a lasting stability in the region cannot be achieved. In other words, if the Middle East arms control process is to succeed in the end, the minimum legitimate security needs of all the regional countries must met.

Meanwhile, participation of the Palestinians can be discussed, but I believe that they must be represented eventually in some way in all multilateral processes because they are a part

of the principal regional problem. On the other hand, in the case of arms proliferation, the participation of arms exporting countries is essential to the success of the initiative.

The Arms Transfers and Proliferation Restraints

President Bush's initiative calls on the five major suppliers of conventional arms to meet at senior levels to discuss the establishment of guidelines for restraints on destabilizing transfers of conventional arms, as well as weapons of mass destruction and associated technology.³⁴ The initiative also calls on the suppliers to discuss the establishment of effective domestic export controls on the end-use of arms or other items to be transferred and to provide one another with an annual report on transfers.³⁵

Initially, calling on the major arms exporter countries was a positive approach, because these countries (China, France, initially the former Soviet Union but now Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States) accounted for 78 percent of all arms transfers to the Middle East in 1985-1989.³⁶ They are also the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and the world's only declared nuclear-armed states. At the same time, it would be impossible to get together all importer and exporter countries around a table and still be able to get agreement on meaningful restraints.

The Bush Initiative also noted: "Post-war efforts should encourage responsible behavior by both arms recipients and their

suppliers in an effort to prevent dangerous regional imbalances and to promote stability".³⁷ At the same time, according to the proposal, the process should ensure that, "These efforts should take into account the legitimate defensive needs of countries in the region and should recognize that their ability to deter aggression is also an important stabilizing factor".³⁸ Thus, on one hand, this approach provides enough flexibility and opportunity for the countries not to restrain arms transfers to friendly countries, namely to Israel, Saudi Arabia and Egypt. Yet, on the other hand, this approach could create suspicions in some other regional countries about the proposals because there was no definition of "the legitimate defensive needs" and "regional imbalances". Moreover, who will decide when the situation becomes "dangerous"? These ambiguous points need to be clarified.

However, it is the United States that is the leading supplier of conventional arms to the Middle East. Since the Gulf War, U.S. arms sales in the region have been increasing.³⁹ This is in sharp contrast to the days immediately after the Gulf War, when the United States initiated a new arms restraints approach to Middle East weapons sales. Apparently, economic forces may be a greater factor in promoting rather than restraining the arms trade. Countries must be more careful not to put short term economic benefits in the first place without taking into account the long term costs of exceeding the appropriate limits of the legitimate security needs of the

regional countries. This can again lead to a new arms race and create new conflicts and instabilities in the region.

Conventional Armaments-Missiles

In order to establish a secure and stable balance of conventional armed forces in Middle East at lower levels, it will be necessary to eliminate disparities prejudicial to stability and security. But at this stage, it may not be possible to get all regional countries to agree on how to eliminate their offensive weapons, such as aircraft, helicopters, tanks or artillery, which create instability in the region.

Another difficulty is that it is not very easy to transfer the experience of arms reductions in the CFE process to the Middle East, because, in Europe there were two major blocs (NATO and WP) to compare and balance the forces to eliminate disparities. In the Middle East there are no two parties. It is multipolar, and the polarities are constantly undergoing change.⁴⁵

Therefore, a "step-by-step approach" may be advisable to address the more pressing issues. One such issue is surface to surface missiles (SSMs) which are the most dangerous weapons of the region, because they can be used to deliver nuclear, chemical and biological munitions as well as conventional munitions. Today, Israel, Syria, Egypt, Iran, Libya, Yemen and Saudi Arabia all have significant missile capabilities, some of which are more sophisticated than those possessed by Iraq. However, the Iraqi

missile threat may be revived; Iraqi missile engineers and plans probably survived the Persian Gulf War.⁴²

The following summarizes the current estimates of surface to surface missiles in the Middle East:⁴³

Country	System	Status	Range(Km)	Payload(kg)
Egypt	Badr 2000	canceled	1,000	500
	Al-Ahred	canceled in 1960s	950	n.a.
	Scud B	deployed/employed	280	1,000
	Scud 100	under development	n.a.	n.a.
	Al-Zafir	canceled in 1960s	370	n.a.
	Al-Kahir	canceled in 1960s	600	n.a.
	Sakr 80	deployed	80	200
	FROG-5	deployed	50	250
	FROG-7	deployed/employed	70	450
	Scud B	deployed/employed	280	1,000
Iran	Oghab	deployed/employed	40	300
	Nazeat	deployed	130	n.a.
Israel	Shahin-2	under development	110-130	n.a.
	Jericho 2 B	tested in 1987	1,500	750
	Shavit	tested in 1988/89	--	--
	Jericho 1	deployed	480	250
	Jericho 2	deployed	750	450-680
	Lance	deployed	120	200
	Flover proj.	canceled in 1970s	200	n.a.
Syria	Scud B	deployed	280	1,000
	OTRAG	canceled in 1981	--	--
	FROG-7	deployed/employed	70	450
	SS-21	deployed	120	250
Saudi Arabia	DF-3 (CSS-2)	deployed	2,200	2,000
Libya	Scud B	deployed/employed	280	1,000
	OTRAG	under development	500	--
	Al-Fatih	under development	480-720	n.a.
	FROG-7	deployed	70	450
Kuwait	FROG-7	deployed	70	450
Yemen	Scud B	deployed	280	1,000
	FROG-7	deployed	70	450
	SS-21	deployed	120	250

The Bush Initiative attempts to cover all conventional armed forces, but because of the difficulties mentioned above, it specifically addresses only control of surface-to-surface

missiles by offering to establish some measures to be taken by both suppliers and recipients:

The initiative proposes a freeze on the acquisition, production, and testing of surface-to-surface missiles by states in the region with a view to the ultimate elimination of such missiles from their arsenals.

Suppliers would also step up efforts to coordinate export licensing for equipment, technology, and services that could be used to manufacture surface-to-surface missiles. Export licenses would be provided only for peaceful end uses.

The idea has the important effect of eliminating, or at least minimizing, the proliferation of means to deliver mass-destruction weapons in the region. Today, the missiles in the region are considered as conventional weapons. But one should not forget the potential that SSMs can be used to deliver nuclear, chemical or biological warheads.

The proposal also imposes responsibilities on importer and exporter countries. By including supplier nations, the second part of the proposal strengthens the chance of successful implementation because it does not depend solely on self-restraint of regional countries.

Nuclear Weapons

The Bush Initiative also builds on existing institutions and focuses on activities directly related to nuclear weapons capability. President Bush's initiative would:

- call on regional states to implement a verifiable ban on the production and acquisition of weapons-usable nuclear material (enriched uranium or separated plutonium);

-reiterate our call on all states in the region that have not already done so to accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty;

-reiterate our call to place all nuclear facilities in the region under International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards; and

-continue to support the eventual creation of a regional nuclear weapon-free zone.⁴⁵

Such a proposal could lead to an optimistic conclusion because, except for Israel, regional countries need external help to produce nuclear weapons. At the same time, pressure from Western countries has had an important deterrent effect that has restrained the ability of regional actors to produce nuclear weapons. On the other hand, the possibility exists that some states in the region might take advantage of the collapse of Eastern Europe and loopholes in international controls to obtain nuclear devices or material.⁴⁵ Nor should one forget the continuing efforts of Iran, Iraq and Libya to acquire these weapons. For instance, Iran's vice president, Ayatollah Mohajerani, in an interview with the newspaper Abrar, said that if Israel is allowed to have a nuclear capacity, then Islamic states, too, should have the same right.⁴⁶

Perhaps a better and more lasting solution would be to convince Israel to participate in a nuclear weapons-free zone by giving up its weapons in return for appropriate security guarantees. These security guarantees could include the commitment of the United States nuclear umbrella, among others. Such a decision by Israel also would make it possible to eliminate other cheap and easy to produce mass-destruction

weapons in the region, namely chemical and biological weapons. All restrictions should be considered as a package, and this package should be accepted by all regional countries including appropriate security building measures and a strict verification regime. At present, there is the U.N. Security Council embargo against arms transfers to Iraq, as well as the efforts of the U.N. Special Commission to eliminate Iraq's remaining capabilities to use or produce nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them.⁴⁷ So, in my opinion, it would not be difficult to convince Iraq on this topic. In the case of convincing other regional countries, possible Israeli sacrifices for a change at lasting peace and the new role of the United State in the region could be used as leverage.

Chemical Weapons

President Bush's recent initiative called for early completion of the global Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which has been accomplished. The initiative also called for all states in the region to commit themselves as original parties to the convention and immediately institute confidence-building measures by engaging in pre-signature implementation of appropriate chemical weapons convention provisions.⁴⁸

Under the provisions of the CWC signed in Paris on 13 January 1993 signatories agree to destroy all their chemical weapons within 10 years of the treaty's entry into force.⁴⁹ The CWC further establishes a system of on-site inspections of

chemical plants capable of making chemical weapons and contemplates sanctions against countries violating the accord. Countries that refuse to sign the treaty may, after a specified period, also face an embargo of sales of certain chemical products.⁵¹ This provision offers the United Nations an opportunity to apply pressure on any country in the Middle East who may not want to sign the treaty.

On the last day of the Paris meeting, however, the 22-nation Arab League announced that Arab countries would not sign the CWC on the grounds that Israel possesses nuclear weapons. Since then, nonetheless, several Arab countries (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Mauritania and Iran) have agreed to sign the treaty. Libya, Jordan, Yemen, Kuwait and Oman have indicated that they will do so in a short time.⁵² In the first three days 125 countries signed this historic treaty.⁵² As of 26 March 1993, 140 nations had signed the convention; including Israel, Iran, Kuwait, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and United Arab Emirate.⁵³

Biological Weapons

As with the approach to chemical weapons controls, President Bush's proposals build on an existing global approach. The proposed initiative would:

- call for strengthening the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) through full implementation of existing BWC provisions and an improved mechanism for information exchange. These measures will be pursued at the five-year Review Conference of the BWC in September 1991;

-urge regional states to adopt biological weapons confidence-building measures.⁵⁴

Thus far, no progress has been made in the region on this subject, except the continuation of the U.N. Security Council embargo against arms transfers to Iraq, as well as the efforts of the U.N. Special Commission to eliminate Iraq's remaining capabilities to use or produce biological weapons and the missiles to deliver them. Because of the confidence I have in these latest developments on the chemical weapons ban, I strongly believe that a similar regime can be adopted for biological weapons both in the world and in the region.

Big Five Initiative on Arms Transfer and Proliferation Restraints

Paris Meeting, 9 July 1991.

In response to Bush's 29 May 1991 initiative, representatives of the United States of America, the People's Republic of China, France, the United Kingdom, and the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, met in Paris on the 8-9 July 1991 to review issues related to conventional arms transfers and to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The closing communique reflects the significant results they achieved.⁵⁵ Briefly, the five nations accepted Bush's initial proposal to undertake effective measures of non-proliferation and arms control on a global, as well as a regional basis. The five powers also confirmed that they would not transfer conventional

weapons in circumstances which would undermine stability in the Middle East.⁵⁶

London Meeting, 18 October 1991

In accordance with their agreement in Paris, representatives of the five countries met again in London on 17-18 October 1991 to continue discussion on issues related to conventional arms transfers and to the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Following from the closing declaration issued in Paris, they agreed on common guidelines for the export of conventional weapons. But, the guidelines in the communique issued in London are nearly the same as the guidelines they issued after the Paris meeting.⁵⁷ Apparently, therefore, little concrete progress has been achieved. While one must not forget the difficulties inherent in these issues, continuing the process of discussion and cooperation contributes to a worldwide climate of vigilance in this field.

United Nations Arms Transfer Reporting System

The continuing discussions among the five major arms exporting countries gave new impetus to another arms control process under auspices of the United Nations, which covers not only the Middle East, but the world as a whole. In the Fall 1991, the United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 46\36L, "Transparency in Armaments," by a final vote of 150-0. This resolution called on the UN Secretary General to establish

an open United Nations Register on Conventional Arms. Under terms of the resolution, nations are to report voluntarily arms transfers, that is numbers of weapons imported into or exported from their territory. The system would cover battle tanks, armored combat vehicles, large caliber artillery systems, combat aircraft, attack helicopters, warships, and missiles or missile systems.⁵⁸

This "Transparency in Armaments" resolution opened the door to consideration of regular reporting of other basic military indicators: "military holdings of arms, procurement of arms through national production and relevant policies".⁵⁹ This example shows, once again, that all arms control developments in the world are closely interrelated and must be taken into account together with political developments. For instance, this system could be used as the initial foundation for arms control in the Middle East without waiting for other specific arms control measures to be agreed upon within the region.

Arms Control Meetings in which Middle East Countries are Involved

Without the participation and contribution of regional countries, a serious arms control process in the Middle East cannot be achieved, because regional security and stability is a vital concern for them. The arms control efforts of arms exporting countries in the Middle East must be reinforced by the efforts of regional countries. The Moscow Conference of January 1993 represents an important starting point in this regard

because it was the first successful attempt to get regional actors together to discuss their security and stability problems and to start a new arms control process.

The United States and Russia co-sponsored the first Multilateral Middle East Peace Conference held in Moscow, January 28-29, 1992. Thirty-five countries, including most of the Middle East countries such as Morocco, Tunisia, Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Yemen, as well as Turkey, France, United Kingdom, China and Japan, participated in this conference. Iran, Iraq and Libya were not invited to participate in the conference and Syria, Jordan and Lebanon refused to attend the conference because of Israeli occupation of Arab territories. Palestinians came to Moscow, but their delegates were not accepted by neither American and Russian sponsors nor Israel, because some Palestinian delegates were chosen from East Jerusalem, as well as from outside the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Despite the absence of these participants, the Moscow Conference can be considered a major step forward in the arms control process. Delegates from 35 countries, including the broadest band of Arab countries ever to sit at the same table with Israel, agreed to continue discussions. They established five working groups (economic development, refugees, environment, water resources and arms control and regional security) to focus on a specific problem. Additionally, a multilateral steering

committee was established in Lisbon to coordinate the efforts of these sub-groups.

The third round of multilateral talks on the five different subjects have been held in different capitals in the world.⁶¹ Of course, some difficulties still exist. For example, Syria and Lebanon have stayed away from the multilateral negotiations, and Israel decided not to participate in the Refugee and Economic Working Groups. Despite these difficulties discussions have continued, and the talks show promise, if for no other reason than the parties are engaged in a continuing dialogue.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

General

The Gulf Crisis and War of 1990-91 showed us, once again, the importance of the need for a lasting peace in this unique region not only for the benefit of the Middle East countries, but for the world as a whole. This can best be accomplished through peace talks among the regional countries.

Solving these problems will not be easy and will require time, patience, and continued efforts because the problems we face in the Middle East are complicated and reinforced by deep hostilities. On the other hand, without solving these major problems, one cannot expect significant arms control agreements in the region. At the same time, arms control efforts will keep its importance in every stage. For instance, arms control efforts have an important role to play in eliminating or at least

minimizing the decades-long struggle and mistrust among regional countries and creating an appropriate atmosphere for progress in peace talks to solve the overarching problems. After solving the major political problems, the arms control process and agreements will maintain their importance by keeping the balance and mutual understanding among regional countries for the security and stability of the region. So, we have to support every effort, as much as possible, in every field -- political, economic, social and environmental -- that contribute to arms control efforts in the region.

Political Field

The peace talks between the Arabs and Israelis initiated by President Bush after the Gulf War should be supported. The following key points in this field should be remembered:

- All the parties in the region must understand that achieving an honorable, lasting peace in the region is more beneficial for all than continuing instability and uncertainty in the region.

- All the countries must be more flexible in order to be able to achieve these results.

- Israel appears to be the key country in solving major regional problems, and the U.S. is the only country able to influence Israel.

- Without jeopardizing its commitments to basic and legitimate Israeli security needs, the United States must treat the parties more even-handedly.

- Despite the historically strong ties between the U.S. and Israel, U.S. interests as a whole should not be held hostage by special interest groups, no matter how powerful they may be in the domestic U.S. political arena.

The Arms Transfers and Proliferation Restraints

President Bush's initiative of 29 May 1991 strengthened the effectiveness of arms control in the region and made it possible to make significant steps in this field. Yet to be accomplished, however, are the following issues:

- The initiative of the "Big Five" concerning arms transfers and proliferation restraints to the Middle East has to be intensified. The initiative must be also widened to include other countries that export arms to the region.

- Arms exporter countries must be careful to balance regional and national security needs and arms sales. If not, arms sales could again lead to a new arms race and create new conflicts and instabilities in the region.

- The agreed "United Nations arms transfer system" could be used as a starting point for arms control in the Middle East without waiting for other specific arms control measures to be agreed upon in the United Nations. This agreement should be expanded to include more comprehensive measures, such as a strict

verification regime and compulsory obligation instead of voluntary application.

- Pressure could be increased on the Middle East countries to take more significant steps to eliminate the proliferation of mass-destruction weapons in the region. This could be accomplished if the United States guaranteed Israeli security, to include extending the U.S. nuclear umbrella to Israel.

- Maintain or increase political pressure, together with sanctions (an embargo of sales of certain chemical products), on those countries that refuse to sign the Chemical Weapons Convention of 13 January 1993. Concurrently, convince regional countries to implement CWC provisions before entry into force of the treaty (probably before January 15, 1995).

- Intensify international efforts to achieve a Biological Weapons Convention similar to CWC.

Multilateral Arms Control Negotiations

Initial efforts within the Multilateral Arms Control Negotiations represent a good start, but a broad range of additional initiatives will have to be pursued if these negotiations are to reach a successful conclusion. Specifically:

- Syria and Lebanon must be incorporated into the multilateral negotiations, by pressure, if necessary.

- Additionally, Israel must be convince to join the working groups on economic development and refugees.

- Also, problems over participation of the Palestinians should be solved. All of these participation problems have to be overcome as a matter of high priority because they are the major parties in the region and no problem can be solved without talking.

- In the future, after achieving some significant results together with taking into account the last political developments, it will be necessary to incorporate Iraq, Iran, and Libya into the process to complete the security and stability zone in the Middle East.

- Establishing this new security and stability zone, including all the Mediterranean and Middle East countries, will enhance and widen the European security and stability zone (from the Atlantic to Vancouver), as both regions will influence and complement one another.

- Also, it will be possible to cooperate, standardize and widen the confidence-building measures in different arms control and disarmament processes, such as CSCE, Open Skies and CFE in Europe and the arms control process in the Middle East, when it is appropriate.

- Encouraging common economic interests can create more stability and cooperation among the countries, in the same way that Germany and France did in the European Community. Starting from this point of view, special attention should be given to the studies of the economic development, environment, water resources, and refugee sub-groups.

- Feasible projects can be encouraged and used for the benefit of the entire region, such as conserving and enhancing the region's limited water supply, the Turkish water pipeline project, environmental projects in the Gulf of Aqaba, in refugee camps in occupied territories and in Eastern Mediterranean, lifting the Arab economic embargo against Israel, or other projects enhancing economic cooperation among regional countries, some practical solutions for divided refugee families etc.

- Developments in the arms control and regional security sub-group have a special importance because of their direct effects on the security and stability of the region. Efforts should start with practical measures for reducing tension and the risk of conflict in the region by establishing direct communication links among the regional countries to use in crisis to eliminate misunderstandings.

- One of the first steps would be the voluntary exchange of information among the regional countries. Follow-on agreements could lead to compulsory exchange, and finally to on-site inspection and verification.

In conclusion, after the Gulf Crisis and War of 1990-91, the Middle East peace process has opened new opportunities for lasting peace in the region. Great progress has been made so far, but still there is a lot to be done. We have to continue to increase our efforts, not waste what we have achieved, and not miss these historic opportunities.

ENDNOTES

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5. Clinton Bailey, "Rabin's Best Chance," The New York Times, 19 October 1992, p. A17.
6. Atkeson, p. 4.
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8. Rowland Evans and Robert Novak, "Nuclear Warheads For Iran?" The Washington Post, 12 October 1992, p. A23.
9. Craig R. Whitney, "Illicit Atom-Material Trade Worries Germans," The New York Times, 20 October 1992, p. A8.
10. Bill Gertz, "Chinese Build Reactor For Iranian Program," The Washington Times, 16 October 1992, p. 3.
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12. Richard Grimmett, "President Bush's Middle East Arms Control Initiative: One Year Later," Arms Control Today, June 1992, p. 15.
13. In order to avoid some of its arms destruction responsibilities under the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) process, before the agreement was reached, the U.S.S.R., by its own admission, withdrew more than 70,000 heavy conventional weapons (20,580 tanks, 24,100 artillery pieces, and 25,480 armored combat vehicles) from Europe to the east of Urals between 1988-90. This example can give us an idea about the excess armaments in these countries. Welch, Larry D.; Gary, Colin S.; Green, Michael J.; Heilbrunn, Jacob E.; Berkowitz, Marc J.,

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18. Jackson Diehl, "Strategic Plans Giving Way to Mideast Arms Flow," The Washington Post, 4 October 1992, p. A24.

19. Tanya L. Domi, "Sale of Fighter Jets Harms U.S. Credibility," The Christian Science Monitor, 20 October 1992, p. 6.

20. Andy Pasztor, "White House Girds to Promote Huge Arms Sales to Many Nations," The Wall Street Journal, 24 July 1992, p. A7.

21. Rosmary Hollis, "Security Developments in the Middle East," Military Technology, Vol. 16, No. 5, 1992, p. 16.

22. Department of the Army, Course 5: Regional Strategic Appraisals Common Readings Term II, Academic Year 1993, (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, 15 December 1992), p. 93.

23. MGSİ (A section in Turkish Foreign Affairs), "Orta Dogu Baris Konferansi, Orta Dogu'da Silahların Denetimi ve Bölgesel Güvenlik," 16 Ocak 1992, p. 3.

24. Helsinki Final Act which was accepted by 35 CSCE countries in 1975 contains ten main principles: I. Sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty; II. Refraining from the threat or use of force; III. Inviolability of frontiers; IV. Territorial integrity of States; V. Peaceful settlement of disputes; VI. Non-intervention in internal affairs; VII. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief; VIII. Equal rights and self-determination of peoples; IX. Co-operation among States; X. Fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law. Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe: Final Act, Helsinki, 1975, The Department of State Bulletin Reprint, Bureau of Public Affairs Office of Media Services, pp.2-4.

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29. Department of the Army, Course 5: Regional Strategic Appraisals Common Readings Term II, Academic Year 1993, p. 104.

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